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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001758

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, S/E WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG, AF/C
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

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SUBJECT: SOUTHERN KORDOFAN: MISSEIRIYA MIGRATION PROCEEDS
CALMLY, BUT JEM A POSSIBLE SPOILER

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) The seasonal migration of the Misseriya Arabs and their cattle through Abyei to South Sudan has begun and is proceeding smoothly, Deputy Nazir of the Misseriya Sadig Babo Nimr told CDA Fernandez December 2. Nimr also reported that the Interim Administration is doing well and that the Misseriya and the Dinka communities are getting along fine, despite continued attempts by former SPLM "administrator" to Abyei Edward Lino's occasional attempts to "throw stones from Cairo" where he is now living. He said there would be a conference between the Nazirs of the two tribes in Abyei on December 5 to ensure continued harmony during the seasonal migration, which will last until May. Nimr predicted that everything will go smoothly until June when the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague is expected to announce the "award" (decision) on Abyei's borders. "We need assurances that the decision will be transparent," said Nimr, "or the Misseriya will reject the decision." He pointed out that the NCP has always cheated the Misseriya, noting that "the CPA did away with West Kordofan and now we are losing Abyei as well."

¶2. (SBU) Nimr said that money still has not been deposited into the Abyei Interim Administration nor into the fund for the Misseriya community (the two percent that the Misseriya should receive per the Abyei Protocol). He also said that no projects envisioned under the "Unity Fund" administered by NCP representative Yehia Babiker have begun. This information contradicts what Misseriya NCP representative Dirdeiry Ahmed Mohammed and Babiker himself told us in separate meetings last week. They claimed that money had been deposited and that the only requirement now is to find a way to administer the funds. (Note: It is possible that there is a lack of communication on what is required for administration of these funds, or that the NCP is simply lying and has not deposited anything. Post will try to establish precisely what has happened to the funds, whether anything has been deposited, and what steps are required before funds can be administered. End note.) Nimr rejected the notion that the distant government of South Kordofan should be allowed to administer the two percent destined for the Misseriya community. He predicted that the Misseriya will reject such a prospect because "the NCP is corrupt" and 77 percent of the state funds in South Kordofan go toward "sovereignty status" projects which only benefit the tiny political elite there - for example the purchase of vehicles or other items which only go to the ruling class.

¶3. (SBU) Nimr demanded a board of directors to administer the funds, but acknowledged that this has not been established. He said the most urgent needs are water projects including

pipled water into homes, education including mobile schools to reach nomadic populations, improved medical services and more clinics, and most of all a paved road between Babanussah and Muglad. He noted that the Misseriya are up for grabs, increasingly alienated from a duplicitous Khartoum. Nimr urged continued US engagement and increased USG development targeting the Misseriya in their heartland around Muglad.

¶4. (C) Comment: Nimr's optimistic outlook on this year's migration is a positive sign if accurate. However a combination of a lack of tangible development from the various wealth sharing funds (Dinka, Misseriya, Abyei Interim Administration, and Unity Fund) combined with a controversial decision in June on Abyei's borders from the Permanent Court of Arbitration could raise tensions and lead to more conflict between the Dinka and Misseriya communities by summer of ¶2009. Moreover, we continue to hear ominous reports of Arab militias being armed by the SAF along the Nuba Mountains borders areas, as well as reports that the SPLA may be cooperating behind the scenes with JEM to assist in an assault on locations in South Kordofan. UNMIS conducted several inconclusive overflights earlier this week to assess whether there is any validity to the rumors of a JEM advance into South Kordofan (and the MFA denied our planned travel to the region scheduled for later this week) but there has been little conclusive information about JEM movements in the region. Nonetheless, there is a confluence of signs that the SPLA and the SAF are engaged in activities that could potentially result in a return to conflict along the border. While Abyei has indeed cooled as an issue, some of the tension and factors which led to its explosion in May 2008 have been transferred outside its interim borders into

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Kordofan and along the rest of the still undemarcated North-South border. We will continue to watch this closely, especially as the migratory season progresses, the ICC announcement approaches, and border demarcation is finalized.

¶5. (C) Comment continued: Like the Arab tribes of Darfur, the Misseriya of Kordofan are a major NCP surrogate, used as cannon fodder against the SPLA for years. They are, like the Darfuri Arabs, increasingly alienated and dissatisfied by the NCP shell game which uses them against their tribal foes but never really accepts them as equals. The Misseriya are ripe for wooing away from the clutches of the NCP, a factor that would change the correlation of forces along key parts of the border and weaken the NCP's ability to sow discord as it pursues its traditional policy of "dive and conquer" in Sudan's unruly regions. We urge Washington to continue to seek to find creative ways to influence the Misseriya (and the Darfuri Arabs) away from the NCP. End comment.
FERNANDEZ